



SEPTEMBER 2026

LIVING MY

fiat

Summer Reflections & September Beginnings



Hey Friend,

We're in the final weeks of summer, and I honestly can't believe how fast it went! I'm barely embracing fall, and I'm already seeing memes and reels counting down to Christmas. LOL.

As I continue to age like fine wine, I'm becoming more aware of just how quickly time seems to fly. Yet, I have friends who are retired who tell me time feels like it moves much slower for them. It just goes to show you how much our reality shapes our experience of time. LOL.

This summer taught me something I didn't realize I needed: the importance of completely going off the radar—to rest, to disconnect, and to simply BE in the presence of God. No agenda. No meetings. No action items. No need to accomplish anything. I believe I shared in a previous blog that silence is medicine, and this summer reminded me why.

It was in that silence that God began revealing something else to me: just how important relationships are in our lives. I could feel Him stirring a change in my heart—a change I knew was going to stretch me, challenge me, and ask me to lean into some of my edges.

I've been told more than once that I can be a little aloof when it comes to friendships—and even with my own family. And, well... they're not entirely wrong. LOL. I'm deeply introverted. I prefer smaller gatherings, meaningful one-on-one conversations, and plenty of time alone to recharge.

But somewhere in the quiet of this summer, I realized something: I don't want the second half of my life to be relationship less.

God brings people into our lives for a purpose. Some relationships are meant to stay for a lifetime. Others may only accompany us for a season. Some encourage us, some challenge us, and some reveal parts of ourselves that God is asking us to grow.

But relationships require something from us. They require presence. Vulnerability. Intention. And sometimes, they require us to step outside of what feels comfortable.

So, friend, grab a cup of coffee and settle in. As we say goodbye to summer and step into a new season, I want to dive deeper into what it means to cultivate intentional relationships—with God, with our families, within our friendships, and with the people He places along our path.



Many of you know I've faced some health struggles over the past two years, especially with my heart. Cathy has inspired and encouraged me to start walking again. Because of her yes to Marian Consecration, God gave us a new friendship—and now we're walking together, both literally and as missionary disciples.



Helping souls encounter Jesus through Mary.



DEZIRÉE SLUSHER

Catholic Missionary



Walking Each Other Home

I'm pretty sure we've all experienced being the new person at some point—starting a new school, walking into a new job, or maybe joining CrossFit for the first time and feeling completely out of place while trying to figure out how to properly deadlift without breaking your back. LOL.

Well, that's pretty much how I felt when I first walked into Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church in September 2024.

I didn't know anyone.

I knew almost nothing about Catholicism. And I definitely felt like I stuck out like a sore thumb. Not only are my arms and hands covered in tattoos, but many of them were from my New Age years. I was incredibly self-conscious and convinced people were probably judging the spiritual hippie who had just wandered into their Catholic church. And let's not forget—I live out in the country now, where there are cows, trucks, and guns. LOL. I was definitely out of my element.

But something unexpected kept happening.

People would look at me with the biggest smiles on their faces and say, "Welcome home!" Welcome home??? What Kool-Aid are y'all drinking? LOL. I was expecting strange looks, and instead, people were smiling from ear to ear and genuinely happy that I was there.

I've learned that God has a beautiful way of placing people in our lives to help guide us along the way. One of those people for me was Mama Nancy, a former nun who held my hand for eight months as I went through OCIA—the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults. OCIA is the process through which adults learn about the Catholic faith and prepare to enter fully into the life of the Church and receive the Sacraments of Initiation.

As part of that journey, you have a Catholic sponsor who walks alongside you. Mama Nancy became mine. But she didn't just sponsor me—she also sponsored Vanney and Kade. And here's something I didn't fully understand at the beginning: being someone's sponsor isn't a one-time deal. It's not, "Congratulations, you received your sacraments! Tootles!" LOL.

It's a commitment to continue walking with that person in their faith. It's similar to saying yes to becoming a godparent. You're not simply agreeing to stand next to someone at a baptism, take some pictures, and call it a day. You're saying yes to helping that person grow in faith, praying for them, encouraging them, and striving to be an example of what it looks like to follow Christ.

But I've come to realize there's something even deeper happening within Catholic relationships. We're not simply walking through life together. We're walking each other home. Home to Christ.

Life gets busy. We have work, families, responsibilities, ministries, appointments, and a million other things competing for our attention. Without intention, even relationships that mean the most to us can slowly become relationships we only intend to make time for. God didn't bring these women into my life for one moment or one ceremony. What began through OCIA has grown into relationships that I hope will last a lifetime. So we've become intentional about it. At least once a quarter, we get together. We reconnect. We share where we are in our faith journeys. We talk about our struggles, celebrate our wins, laugh, encourage one another, and continue doing what we originally promised to do:

Walk together.

Because lifelong relationships don't happen accidentally. They require effort. They require presence. And sometimes, they require actually pulling out the calendar and saying, "Okay, when are we doing this?" One of the most practical things I've learned is simple: get the dates on the calendar and lock them in. Treat time with the people you love as something worth protecting. Don't keep moving it because something else came up. Unless it's truly an emergency, honor the commitment. Because if a relationship matters, we have to make room for it.

And sometimes intentional relationships really are that simple: show up, stay connected, and keep walking each other home.



Our Lady *has a way of...* *Bringing Us Together.*

When we talk about intentional relationships, naturally we think about the people we can see—our spouses, children, parents, siblings, friends, coworkers, and the people God places in our lives along the way.

But what about our spiritual relationships?

As Christians, we intentionally cultivate a relationship with the Holy Trinity. We pray to the Father. We follow Jesus. We ask the Holy Spirit to guide us. We make time for prayer, read Scripture, receive the Sacraments, and sit quietly in the presence of God. Like every meaningful relationship, our relationship with God requires our participation. We have to show up.

But there is another relationship that has completely transformed my spiritual life: my relationship with our Blessed Mother.

Mary is not God. We don't worship Mary, and she never asks us to. Mary always points beyond herself to her Son. Her entire life is a testimony of surrender to God and discipleship to Jesus Christ.

Yet for an entire decade as a Protestant, non-denominational Christian, I don't remember anyone ever teaching me about the significance of Mary or the role she played—and continues to play—in the Christian life.

Then I became Catholic, and suddenly I began seeing her everywhere in Scripture.

At the Annunciation, God invited Mary into His plan of salvation, and this young woman responded with one of the greatest acts of surrender in human history:

“Let it be done to me according to your word.”

Her *fiat*. Her yes.

God could have accomplished His plan however He desired, yet He chose to invite Mary to freely cooperate with His grace. Through her yes, she became the Mother of Jesus Christ—true God and true man.

And Mary didn't simply give birth to Jesus and disappear from the story.

She followed Him.
She listened to Him.
She trusted Him.
She stood beside Him.

And when almost everyone else had fled, Mary remained at the foot of the Cross. She is the model of what it looks like to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.

And it was there, at the Cross, that Jesus said something I had read many times as a Protestant but never really stopped to consider. Looking at Mary and the beloved disciple John, Jesus said to His mother, “Woman, behold, your son.” Then He said to John, “Behold, your mother.”

And Scripture tells us that from that hour, John took Mary into his home. There is something so beautiful about those words when we think about intentional relationships.

John didn't simply acknowledge Mary as his mother. He made room for her. He took her into his home and into his life.

As Catholics, we understand something profound happening at the foot of the Cross: Mary, who is the Mother of Christ, is also given to us as a spiritual mother. John represents something much bigger than himself. In him, we can see ourselves standing beneath the Cross and receiving the same invitation: Behold, your mother.



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The Fourth Commandment tells us to honor our father and mother. And while that commandment first concerns our earthly parents and the authority God has established within the family, it has made me reflect deeply on what it means to honor the spiritual mother Jesus has given us. For me, Marian consecration became one way of saying: Mary, I want to take you into my home, too.

Into my prayer life.
Into my decisions.
Into my struggles.
Into my relationships.
Into my mission.
Into the ordinary moments of my day.

Because having a spiritual mother isn't simply a beautiful theological idea. **Mothers are meant to mother.** They teach. They nurture. They encourage. They correct. They comfort. They protect. And ultimately, a good mother prepares her children to become who God created them to be. That is how I have experienced Mary.

She has taught me surrender.
She has taught me obedience.
She has taught me how to sit with Jesus.
She has taught me that sometimes discipleship means doing something, and sometimes it means simply remaining faithfully at the foot of the Cross. Most importantly, Mary has never kept me for herself.

She continually leads me back to her Son. That is the heart of Marian consecration. We aren't placing Mary in the place of Jesus. We're intentionally entrusting ourselves to the woman whose entire existence points toward Him.

And relationships require intentionality.

We can know about someone without ever truly knowing them.
We can have someone's phone number and never call. We can live in the same house and barely speak. We can even love someone deeply and still neglect the relationship.

Our spiritual relationships aren't much different. If I want a relationship with Mary, I have to make room for her. I have to pray with her. Learn about her. Meditate on her life in Scripture. Pray the Rosary and allow her to walk me through the life of Jesus. I have to ask for her intercession and, most importantly, remain open to allowing her example to change the way I follow her Son.

For me, Marian consecration was taking that relationship one step deeper. And somewhere along the way, I began to recognize that perhaps part of the mission God has entrusted to me is helping other people discover this relationship for themselves.

This summer, I had the privilege of facilitating my fourth Marian consecration cohort, preparing together for consecration on the feast of Our Lady of Perpetual Help. And once again, I watched something beautiful happen. What began as individual women saying yes to a deeper relationship with our Blessed Mother became women walking alongside one another toward Jesus. We prayed together. We learned together. We shared pieces of our lives and our faith journeys. And ultimately, each woman had to make her own personal fiat. Mary had her yes. And now we were being invited to give ours.

That's one of the beautiful things I've discovered about intentional relationships with God: they have a way of creating intentional relationships with other people. Mary builds community because Mary always leads us toward Christ—and when we're all moving toward the same Person, eventually our paths begin crossing. Maybe that's one of the lessons God has been trying to teach me during this season of my life.

I spent years thinking my spiritual life was primarily about me and God. But Christianity was never designed to be lived alone. Jesus gave us a Father. He gave us His Spirit. He gave us His Body, the Church. And from the Cross, He even gave us His mother. So perhaps intentional relationships aren't simply about scheduling more coffee dates or remembering to text our friends back. Maybe they begin with recognizing the relationships God has already placed before us—and choosing to make room for them. To show up. To remain. To say yes. And sometimes, like John, to simply take Mary into our home and allow our Mother to lead us closer to her Son.



My little spiritual niece got to visit The Quest Radio Station! I'll have to share our hilarious conversation about how a four-year-old rationalizes that Jesus died... but is still alive. That story deserves its own blog!

In the meantime, check out my latest [Quest interview](#) celebrating the feast day of St. Maximilian Kolbe, my Confirmation saint! Located on the homepage of my website.



When Saying Yes Takes You Into the Crowd

In my last blog, I shared a realization God has been stirring in me about the importance of relationships. I also shared something that anyone who knows me already knows very well: I am an introvert. Like... a serious introvert. I'm a natural hermit. I love silence. I love being home. I hate traffic. I hate crowds. Put me in a quiet room with Jesus, a cup of coffee, and my dog, and I can happily disappear from civilization. LOL. But apparently, God has other plans.

This summer, I stepped outside my comfort zone and took my spiritual goddaughter to an Atlanta Braves game. That might not sound like a major accomplishment to most people, but for me? Atlanta traffic + thousands of people + a crowded stadium = an act of sacrificial love. LOL. And then God presented another opportunity for me to face the world.



The 2026 FIFA World Cup came to Atlanta.

And somehow, introverted Ré ended up on the streets of Atlanta, surrounded by thousands upon thousands of people from around the world... passing out Rosaries. Who am I??? I had said yes to supporting The Quest Atlanta Catholic Radio at the World Cup, and I was there for the final match in Atlanta between Argentina and England. It was truly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. The World Cup was happening practically in my backyard, and I had the chance not only to experience it but to be there sharing God's love. And you know what? I had an absolute blast.

Since May, I've had the honor of being a frequent guest on The Morning Quest with Josh and Allison. Until the World Cup, however, Allison and I had never actually met in person. Then I showed up to work The Quest booth. I finally met her, and there was an instant connection. There is something special about meeting someone you've already been building a relationship with through shared faith and mission. We weren't starting from zero. God had already been laying the foundation. And getting The Quest to the FIFA World Cup was no small undertaking. Allison felt the Holy Spirit inspiring her to make it happen, and she said yes. That yes created an opportunity for so many other yeses—including mine. And then came a moment I don't think I'll ever forget.

On the last day, we ran out of Rosaries. Then all of our tiny Mary figures were gone. And I bawled my eyes out. I watched people from all over the world light up when we handed them a Rosary or one of those little Mary figures. Some people would tell us, "You never find Mary!" They were genuinely excited to receive her. Something about that completely overwhelmed me. Here we were at one of the largest sporting events in the world, surrounded by different countries, languages, cultures, jerseys, flags, and thousands of people—and people were excited about Mary. My heart could barely handle it.

These weren't huge theological conversations. I wasn't standing on a street corner preaching a homily. Sometimes evangelization looked as simple as smiling at a stranger, handing them a Rosary, giving them a tiny image of our Blessed Mother, and reminding them that God loves them. And I got to witness the joy on their faces. But here's the part that connects all of this back to what God has been teaching me about intentional relationships:

I would have missed it.

I would have missed every single one of those moments if I hadn't been intentional about my relationship with The Quest.

I would have missed meeting Allison in person.

I would have missed the conversations with strangers.

I would have missed watching people's faces light up over a tiny Mary.

I would have missed seeing the Holy Spirit take one person's yes and multiply it through countless other people.

And I definitely would have missed standing in downtown Atlanta passing out Rosaries at the World Cup—which is a sentence I never imagined I would write about myself. LOL. Relationships have a way of opening doors we never would have walked through on our own. That's what I'm beginning to understand about this season of my life.

Being intentional about relationships doesn't mean I suddenly stop being an introvert. It doesn't mean I have to become the person who wants to attend every party, every gathering, or every crowded event. It means I stop allowing comfort to automatically make my decisions for me. Sometimes loving people means making the coffee date. Sometimes it means putting something on the calendar and protecting that time.

Sometimes it means taking your spiritual goddaughter to a baseball game. And apparently, sometimes it means walking straight into a crowd of thousands with Rosaries in your hands. God keeps showing me that when I make room for relationships, I make room for experiences I never could have planned for myself. And when the Holy Spirit presents an opportunity to love people—even when it stretches this little hermit far beyond her comfort zone—I'm learning to simply say:

Yes.